GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2265
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2017
Community Radio Stations
Patil Shri Kapil Moreshwar

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

a) whether the Government has granted permission for 519 community radio stations to operate in the country and if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether the Government has granted private FM channels and community radio stations to broadcast news and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING [COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)]

(a) Government has issued 554 Letters of Intent (LOIs), out of which 265 Grant of Permission Agreements (GOPAs) have been signed for setting up of Community Radio Stations across the country. State wise numbers of LOIs issued and GOPAs signed are at Annexure.

(b) Under the extant to FM Radio Phase−III policy guidelines, Private FM radio permission holders are permitted to carry the news bulletins of All India Radio in exactly same format, on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed with Prasar Bharati. No other news and current affairs programmes are permitted under the FM Radio Phase−III policy

Also, as per policy guidelines for setting up of community radio stations in India, the community radio permission holder shall not broadcast any programmes, which relate to news and current affairs and are otherwise political in nature. However, Community Radio Stations can broadcast news and current affairs contents sourced exclusively from AIR in its original form or translated into the local language/dialect. AIR shall source its news to community radio stations without any charges.

The broadcast pertaining to the following categories will be treated as non-news and current affairs broadcast and will therefore be permissible on community radio stations and private FM channels.

a) Information pertaining to sporting events excluding live coverage. However live commentaries of sporting events of local nature may be permissible.

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b) Information pertaining to Traffic and Weather;
c) Information pertaining to and coverage of cultural events, festivals;
d) Coverage of topics pertaining to examinations, results, admissions, career counseling;
e) Availability of employment opportunities;
f) Public announcements pertaining to civic amenities like electricity, water supply, natural calamities, health alerts etc., as provided by the local administration;
g) Such other categories not permitted at present that may subsequently be specifically permitted by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting from time to time.
In a PIL filed by Common Cause vs UOI, Hon'ble Supreme Court has asked the Government to consider permitting Community Radio Stations and Private FM stations to broadcast news and current affairs programmes. The matter is sub-judice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

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